
Mr. *ELY*'s
S E R M O N

Preach'd near St. JAMES's,
On the D E A T H of
Mrs. *AUCHMUTY*,

Late W I F E of
Robert Auchmuty Esq;

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Mr. Ellis

FERMON

Presided near St. James's

On the DEATH of

Mrs. AUGUSTA

Late WIFE of

Robert Auchmuty Esq;

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

E
The E T E R N A L B U I L D I N G ;
O R,
The Saints Assurance of Happiness.

A
S E R M O N

2
Preach'd in *Glass-house-street*
near *St. James's,*

On *Lord's-day, April 24. 1715.*

Upon the DEATH of
Mrs. ELIZABETH AUCHMUTY,
late Wife of Robert Auchmuty Esq;

By THOMAS ELY.

Publsh'd at the Request of the Rela-
tions of the Deceas'd.

Psal. cxvi. 15.

*Precious in the sight of the Lord is the
Death of his Saints.*

L O N D O N :

Printed for, and Sold by JOSEPH MARSHAL,
at the Bible in *Newgate-street.* 1715.

THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF THE

NAVY

WASHINGTON

DECEMBER 18, 1891

DEAR SIR

On the 18th inst.

I received your letter

of the 17th inst.

relative to the

appointment of

an officer to the

position of

acting surgeon

at the Naval

Station at

San Francisco

and in reply to

inform you that

the same has been

approved by the



2 COR. 5. 1.

For we know that if our Earthly House of this Tabernacle be dissolved, we have a Building of God, an House not made with Hands, Eternal in the Heavens.

THESE Words do plainly set forth an undoubted Expectation of an Immortal and Glorious State of Happiness, after this Mortal one shall be expired: *For if in this Life only we have Hope in Christ, we are of all Men most miserable.* It was the blessed Hope and happy Assurance of an Immortal and Eternal Life, that has carry'd so many heroic Souls above all the Indignities they have been expos'd to in this Life, and which so much supported the holy Apostle St. Paul, under all the Persecutions he endured for his Sincerity and faithful Diligence in Preaching the Everlasting Gospel; nay, it seems to be the sole Foundation of his Happiness.

In the preceding Chapter, he shews, that all the Sufferings and Dangers himself and those that were engag'd with him underwent, did redound to the Praise of God's Power, intimated in these Words, — *We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed: —* And then in some following Verses, we find set down, not only what Benefit they were to the Church

in general ; but the Apostle's own, as well as their Expectation of Immortality ; ——— For which cause we faint not : but tho' our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day, For our light Affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory ; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen ; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal : q. d. We look not, we don't mind the Things of this Life, so far as to hinder our Care and Concern about the Things of another Life ; the Things which are not seen with mortal Eyes, they are the Objects of our Desire, and which we exercise our selves (through Grace) to obtain ; for we walk here by Faith only, not by Sight. And then begins the next Chapter with our Text, which is an Illustration of the Apostle and his Fellow-labourers, their Knowledge and full Assurance of Immortal Happiness, which they had arrived to : For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, and so on.

The Apostle, in these Words, gives us a Description of the Human Body, under the metaphorical Phrase of the *Earthly House of this Tabernacle*, [of our Spirit the Body.] That as the Earthly House is for the Inhabitant to dwell a short time in, so this Body is for the present Residence of the Soul ; whose Excellency far transcends that of the Body, as the Inhabitant is more noble than the House ; being separable from the House, as the Soul is from the Body, and equally as distinct, and may alike subsist when deprived of either : ——— And notwithstanding the most curious Workmanship of the Body ; all its Proportion is no way sufficient to secure it from Storms and Tempests, nor hinder

hinder its being hurried and carried about like the Tent or Tabernacle of a weary Traveller, having no certain Place, but subject to every thing that can incommode it, 'till it returns to Dust and Ashes, from whence it was formed. After which Diffolution of the Body, good Men K N O W that they have [*provided for their Spirit a better Dwelling,*] *a Building of God, an House not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens.*

Altho' these Words do refer to the *Resurrection*, and that a more glorious Building shall be for Body and Soul, when reunited and glorified, than the Body is at present for the Soul; yet the main drift of the Apostle (as several have observed) is, not only, to express the Evidence he and others had of Heaven and Happiness; but also, to give an excellent Description and lasting Assurance thereof: To this therefore I shall have my chiefest regard. And all that I shall attempt from the general Design of these Words, are these Three Things :

- I. *To give you a brief Representation of the Scripture Account of Happiness.*
- II. *Observe the particular Manner the Apostle uses in his Representing this Happiness.*
- III. *Shew what great Assurance the Saints have thereof; We know, &c.*

I shall speak to each of these Heads, and then endeavour to make some Improvement of the Whole.

I. I am

6 The Eternal Building ; or,

I. I am to give you a brief Representation of the
Scripture Account of Happiness.

All Knowledge of Happiness depends upon Divine Revelation: But if we had no Revelation to depend upon, there's something above this lower Region of the Air, and beyond these inferior Orbs, which by the Erectness of our Countenances, naturally looking upwards, we plainly see, and are fully convinc'd of. How plainly is a State of Happiness revealed in the sacred Scriptures? wherein are manifested, — That *those who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for Glory, Honour, and Immortality, shall obtain Eternal Life.* That *the Sheep of Christ shall be placed on his Right Hand, and a most glorious Voice echo forth, — Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the World.* That *the Gift of God is Eternal Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who will cause the Righteous to shine as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father ; and they that turn many unto Righteousness, shall shine as the Stars in the Brightness of the Firmament for ever and ever.* — What Expressions can be fuller than, *that God shall be all in all?* Besides, it's so very excellent, that the highest Expressions, one Hyperbole upon another, are frequently used, and all together insufficient to make us comprehend this Happiness ; For Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither can it enter into the Heart of Man to conceive, what God hath prepared for them that love him. We often read of a *Treasure in Heaven ; a Crown of Righteousness ; the sitting with Christ on his Throne and reigning with him ; and a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory :* But what Description can parallel that magnificent one

St. John

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St. John gives of those blissful Regions, in his Revelation? where he tells us of a *City of pure Gold*, with *Gates of Pearl*, and *Walls of Precious Stones*, *Rivers of Crystal*, *Trees of Life*, *Crowns* and *Thrones of Glory*. And what an Admiration doth the Psalmist break forth into, when he says, — *O how amiable are thy Tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts! Blessed are they that dwell in thy House, for they will be always praising thee.* These Discoveries are so great, as to raise our Hopes and elevate our Expectations after Happiness, and without doubt are designed so to do: But how great soever our Assurances are concerning the same, they will fall infinitely beneath the Dignity of so sublime a Subject.

And this, in short, is the Representation the Scriptures give of Happiness.

II. I shall now proceed to *Observe the particular Manner the Apostle uses in his Representation of Happiness.*

I. St. Paul intimates, that as soon as *the Earthly House of this Tabernacle is dissolv'd*, we have a *Building of God*.

Which Words imply, That immediately after the Dissolution of the *Body*, the *Spirit* is received into a State of Happiness, tho' not so fully as both shall be: But as soon as the *Soul* is *absent from the Body*, it's *present with the Lord*, who hath a Place for its Reception: And therefore the Soul of Man after Death doth exist and live in the separate State. For the Apostle doth not say, *If the whole Man be dissolved*; but, *If the earthly House of this Tabernacle*, i. e. this Body be dissolved, we have a *Building of God*, a Place in Heaven for them to dwell. And this is ratified by
St.

St. John, when he says, — *Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, — from henceforth, ἀπαρτι*, which is immediately after they are dead: They are then presently happy. For the Soul, if happy, must live, and that in an active State, capable of a true and proper Possession of Glory. There is nothing more conspicuous concerning the Immortality of the Soul, than from that Instance of God's calling himself *the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, 400 Years after their Death; and yet 'tis said, — *He is not the God of the Dead, but of the Living*; then their Souls are Living, and do not sleep: For if they did, it must be but a dreaming Happiness their Souls enjoy till the Resurrection. The Soul of Man is Immortal, and immediately after its parting with the Body is received into a Building of God, which is Intimation sufficient of a fixed State of Happiness; as more plainly appears from what Christ said to the Malefactor on the Cross; — *To day shalt thou be with me in Paradise*, which was no other than an intermediate State of Blessedness. Our Lord did not say to him, he should be that Day with him in his Kingdom; for his Kingdom was not to be open till after his Resurrection; that himself was first to ascend thither; therefore his Soul, when parted from the Body, went into *Paradise*, — a State of Blessedness. As God breathed into Man the Breath of Life, and he became a Living Soul, consequently a Rational and Immortal Soul; and therefore when it returns, is carried by *Angels* into *Abraham's Bosom*. If the Soul then be happy in a separate State, how much more will it be when the Body shall be rais'd from the Dead, and the Soul reunited, that so the whole Man may enjoy Eternal Life by Jesus Christ, who will change our vile Bodies, that they may be fashioned like unto his glorious Body,
according

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according to the mighty ~~working~~, whereby he is able to to subdue all things to himself. Then will the Happiness be unspeakable and full of Glory, in this Building of God, in our Father's House where are many Mansions. — And this is our Blessed Saviour's Prayer, — Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my Glory which thou hast given me.

2. This Building is said to be a Building of God,
Ch. 8.

God is the Creator thereof, which must be an Illustration of its Excellency; because the Builder is God. There is none able to compare with him, who is excellent in Council, and wonderful in all his Works. He made Heaven and Earth, and Man after his own Image, capable of Glory; and those who are found obedient to his Heavenly Will, shall have an Entrance administred unto 'em abundantly into the Everlasting Kingdom of God. The Author to the Hebrews, setting forth the Pre-eminence of the Builder above the Building, says, As he that builded the House hath more Honour than the House, so every House is builded by some Man; but he that built all things is God. And in another place tells us, That the Patriarchs look'd for a City, that had Foundations, whose Builder and Maker was God; and desired a better Country than that they were in possession of, namely, an Heavenly.

God has prepared a Place to receive his People, and he will prepare his People for that Place. If God at first formed Man in so curious a manner, as that the Psalmist should say, He was fear-
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fully and wonderfully made; and these Bodies are no more than Places for the Soul: Then, how much more excellent is this Building of God, which he hath made for both Soul and Body! — And if Man be so excellent a Creature, and his Body possessed of so noble a Nature, and honourable Faculties, by the Soul dwelling therein; it's evident that he must be a glorious Being, who was the Creator of Man with such exquisite Capacities and extraordinary Privileges; and that no Workmanship can stand in Competition with his, whose Glory the Heavens declare, and the Firmament sheweth his Handy-work. But how incomprehensible will this make him be, when this Body shall be made a most glorious Body? when this Mortal shall put on Immortality, and this Corruptible shall put on Incorruption, and be received into a Building of God, far surpassing all earthly Structures? where the Almighty, the Builder himself inhabiteth, where the King of Heaven keeps His Imperial Court, even that high and holy Place whereunto no Mortal Eye can approach, and live!

This is a *Building*, not again to be built, but a Place already built, and that by God. It's a Place prepared from the Foundation of the World, and made ready to be a Place of Reception ever since. And inasmuch as Man was born to no less than a Kingdom from the beginning, and this was prepared long before in the Design and Intention; so when Man lost his Dominion, happy was it for him that God had prepared another Place, from whence he could not fall; and which to order in all things and sure, Christ, by his Death purchased, by his Resurrection overcame Death, and by his Ascension took possession of it, and
prepared

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prepared it for a People made ready for the Lord. Must not this then be a glorious Place indeed, not only worthy God for a Dwelling, but for all those he shall graciously be pleased to make the Objects of his Choice!

3. The Excellency of this Building is farther declared (*viâ Eminentiae*) forasmuch as it is said to be *an House not made with Hands.*

Now, as this *Body* is made for the *Soul*, so this *House, not made with Hands*; (*i. e.* not an Earthly but an Heavenly Building) is for *Body* and *Soul* when glorified. If this House be not made with Hands, not by *mortal Men*, whose Workmanship, tho' never so strong and durable, must come to Ruin and Dissolution; then 'tis made by the *Almighty God*, which will never be dissolved, nor its Foundations ever be raz'd.

It's said to be an *House*, with regard to *God*, for *he fills Heaven and Earth with his Presence, and is present every-where.* It may be further called an *House*, because in our Houses we expect to dwell safely; there it is we expect Peace and Rest from all our Labours; and in *Heaven*, there's our Resting-Place from all Sin and Sorrow, where we shall be free from all Difficulties, Dangers, Pains, Wasting Sickneses, and the pressing Afflictions that attend humane Nature; where we shall no longer *sow in Tears*, but *reap in Joy*; where we shall no longer pass thro' a *Howling Wilderness* to the *Heavenly Canaan*; where all *Tears shall be wip'd from our Eyes*; and where we shall be made infinitely happy beyond all that our Wit or Conceit can imagine.

In a *House* we quietly enjoy our Friends, and converse with our Families; so in this House we shall converse with *an innumerable company of Angels*, with *the general Assembly*, and *Church of the First-born* which are written in Heaven, with God the Judge of all, and the Spirits of just Men made perfect, and with Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant; and together with these, we shall converse with many of those brave Souls, those innocent Persons we have heard and read of, and with many of our dear Relations and intimate Friends, and that without any Jealousie or Design one of another, and be everlastingly glorious and happy according to the Promises of God; In this *House*, not made with Hands; which is so excellent and glorious, that St. Paul says, *The invisible things of him from the Creation of the World are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his Eternal Power and Godhead*: And therefore the Saints on Earth are said to *bless and magnifie his Name*.

The most magnificent Temples and Places for the Worship of God *made with Hands*, however excellent and preferable yet can't compare with this matchless House, this holy Place, this seraphick Seat, *not made with Hands*. The Works of Nature exceed the Works of Art; but neither can come near, nor none compare with the Celestial Works of God, which excel the rest of the Creation in Glory. What Resemblance soever the Works of Men may bear to the Workmanship of God, yet no real Likeness: And what Assimilation then can in the least be made, when the great Creator of all Things has made this *House* for the Admiration of his Glory?

4. The Glory of this Great *Builder* is farther illustrated, inasmuch as the Continuance and Perpetuity of this *House* is *eternal in the Heavens*, — they will remain for ever.

The most stately Fabricks and curious Structures that were ever erected with Hands, will moulder into what the Materials were at first composed of, and reduced to nothing but what the wanton Winds will sport with its Dust; but this *Building*, this *House* is of an eternal Duration. If we consult Historians, we may soon inform ourselves what renowned Cities and famous Places have been built, whose Fame has reached the farthest Parts of the Earth, and brought the most distant Traveller to lose himself with Admiration; which for many hundred Years since, have been levell'd with the Dust, and all its Pomp and Glory consumed in its own Rubbish, and not so much as one Stone left upon another to declare its Antiquity; and what is more remarkable, the Places where those Buildings stood are not to be found, and only known that such Appellations and Titles were once given to some certain Places. This informs us, that whatever flatter'd Epithets of Immortality have been inscrib'd on the most lasting Palaces, they are but the Spoils of Time, which consumes and destroys them all, and are now no more: So will all the New Foundations since laid in their room, become as *Dust to Dust*, 'till the whole World in general shall be *dissolved*. Time will wear out all Things, and cause their Glory to decay, until it self shall expire, and be no more. But this *Building of Gad*, this *House not made with Hands*, is *Eternal*; which no Time can demolish, nor set Bounds unto, because its Duration will be to the *Age of Eternity*.
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If the Glories above were not *Eternal*, they could never make us Happy ; to think, that after they had been possessed a short, or a long Time, must be parted with ; and tho' the Expiration of the longest Time was set at the farthest distance, yet the Mind of Man being always looking forward, and unhappily dispos'd to anticipate its own Misfortunes, would at once abate all our Felicity : But since there will be no end of our Happiness, nothing is able to damp our Joys, or take them from us, nor we from them, they being *Eternal*.

And that which adds to all, and crowns the rest, is, that this *Building* is in the *Heavens*, and not on the *Earth*, which is a Place common to *Just* and *Unjust* ; but in *Heaven*, where the *Celestial Society* only have the Enjoyment, and *Eternally* remain in this happy Abode, and shall be free from the Disturbance of the *Wicked* who will be cast into *Hell*, and all the *Nations* that forget *God* : While the one enjoy this Happiness, where are degrees of Glory, as one *Star* differeth from another in *Glory* ; the other shall be tormented with *Eternal* Misery : The one shall go into *Life Everlasting* ; but the other into *Everlasting Punishment*.

And thus have I observed the particular Manner the *Apostle* uses, in his Representation of this Happiness.

And thus it hath pleased *God* to set out the Glory of *Heaven*, by such Metaphors as might reach our Capacities, as *Kingdoms*, *Thrones*, *Sceptres*, *Crowns*, a *Paradise*, *Temple*, *Palace*, *Building* of *God*, a *House* not made with *Hands*, *Eternal* in the *Heavens* : —

And

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And all this, to raise our most enlarg'd Affections, and all the Powers of our Souls, after the greatest Assurance and Expectation of *Immortal Glory at the Resurrection of the Just.*

III. I proceed now to what I principally design'd from this Text, namely, — *To shew what great Assurance the Saints have of their Happiness.*

We find, that the believing Prospect of a Future Glory, whereof Christ's Resurrection was an undeniable Proof, was that which bore up the Spirit of the Apostle, and others with him, and upheld and preserved them from sinking under all the Conflicts and Difficulties they met with in this World; for *they esteem'd the Sufferings of this Life, as not worthy to be compared with the Glory which should be revealed in them; and knew that if they suffer'd for Christ here, they should live and reign with him hereafter.* And what then could more fully declare their happy Assurance than the Text? *We know, &c.*

Their Faith proved to them an unquestionable sort of Knowledge, an infallible Assurance of Happiness, beyond what any other Knowledge could produce, And this was not a groundless Hope, or meer Supposition, but what would no way fail their Confidence; and therefore says the Apostle, — *We know, οὐκ ᾠκνέμεν.* Not, We suppose, or imagine; but, *We know, We are persuaded.*

The Christian Knowledge out-does all other Knowledge whatsoever, which is but imperfect to those infallible Truths, which may and ought most assuredly to

And

to be depended on ; for whatever Hopes they afford us of Happiness, we shall as truly have the Enjoyment as if we were in the actual Possession ; and in the mean time, those things which are to come, will seem as if they were really present. This is secured to the Saints by the greatest Obligations, and after the strongest manner, *That they might have strong Consolation, who have fled for Refuge to lay hold on the Hope set before them ; which Hope they have as an Anchor of the Soul both sure and stedfast, and which enters into that within the Vail, whither the Fore-runner is for them entred, even Jesus, made an High Priest for ever, Heb. 6. 18, 19, 20.*

In the Old Testament, tho' Heaven is frequently obscured with Types and Figures, yet it's certain that the *holy men of old* had a farther Prospect than an earthly Canaan, by the Account St. Paul gives, when speaking of the Patriarchs, ——— *These all died in Faith, not having received the Promises, but were persuaded of them, and hoped for them ;* and which appear to be the Subject of their diligent Waiting and continual Expectation. They viewed, by *Faith*, those things which were at the farthest Distance ; and by *Hope*, embraced that blessed and glorious Place which they now enjoy for their *Inheritance ; for they confessed that they were Strangers and Pilgrims on Earth.* Indeed, *Faith is the Substance of things hoped for, and the Evidence of things not seen ;* and it was this *Faith* that animated those renowned Saints to live as they did, and which so much encouraged their *future Hopes*, as to say plainly, *That they sought a Country, and truly if they had been mindful of that Country from whence they came out, they might have had Opportunity to have return'd : But now they desire a better Country, that is,*
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an heavenly: To which the Apostle subjoins, Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a City. No doubt they were often taught to desire and wait for a better Country than the Land of Canaan; and tho' the Glory of Lands, yet they expected one, whose Glory that was but a poor and mean Simile of; otherwise their Desires and Waitings could not have been so acceptable to God. There are many Instances not only to confirm this happy State, but to shew what Assurance good Men had of it, as to their own Souls, as being their own peculiar Case. Job declares his firm Belief of such a State, which should be consummated at his Resurrection from the Dead; says he, I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the Earth. And tho' after my Skin Worms destroy this Body, yet in my Flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for my self, and mine Eyes shall behold, and not another; tho' my Reins be consumed within me. He was so well persuaded of this, that it made him hold fast his Integrity under all the great Trials and sore Calamities he was exercised with, and which were very much inanced by his miserable Comforters; but he knew that his Redeemer lived, and like good old Jacob, that honourable Saint, who long before lived by Faith, and died in Hope, breathing out his Soul into his Father's Bosom, with a most ardent Expectation of Christ, ——— I have waited for thy Salvation, O Lord. ——— Which when good old Simeon had seen, he breaks forth with his Nunc dimittis, ——— Lord, now lettest thou thy Servant depart in Peace, for mine Eyes have seen thy Salvation. And having seen this Salvation, had the highest Assurance of Eternal Salvation. The Psalmist had certainly this comfortable

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ble *Hope* and *blessed Assurance*, whether with a particular Reference to himself alone, or prophetically to the *Resurrection of Christ* ; either is sufficient to shew his Expectation of *Happiness* ; and therefore says this Royal Prophet, *My Flesh also shall rest in hope, for thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see Corruption. Thou wilt shew me the Path of Life : in thy Presence is fulness of Joy, and at thy right hand are Pleasures for evermore, Ps. 16. 9, 10, 11.* And again, *Thou shalt guide me with thy Counsel, and afterward receive me into Glory. Whom have I in Heaven but thee ? and there is none upon Earth I desire besides thee. My Flesh and my Heart fails ; but God is the Strength of my Heart, and my Portion for ever, Ps. 73. 24, 25, 26.*

And in the New Testament, what greater Knowledge can we have of *Eternal Life* and *Happiness*, than is there assured us by *Jesus Christ*, who hath brought *Life and Immortality to Light by the Gospel* ? Here it is that we meet with an exact Account of all God's Dispensations concerning us, and can trace the several obscure Steps, both of our *Misery* and *Salvation* ; what we were at first by *Nature*, what afterwards by *Corruption*, and what since by *Grace* ; how full of *Death* and *Despair* our Condition once was, and to what a *lively Hope* our Heavenly Father hath begotten us again by the *Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead*. From the Gospel we derive all our Dependences and Assurances ; and it's said to be the *Power of God unto Salvation unto those that believe*. And says the Evangelist, — *Whosoever believeth in the Son shall not perish, but have everlasting Life*. These gracious Promises are frequently repeated, tending to raise the Assurances the Saints have, who know they in particular have

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have a Reward. ——— Verily there is a Reward for the Righteous. And says St. Paul, I have fought a good Fight, I have finish'd my Course, I have kept the Faith; henceforth is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord the Righteous Judge shall give me at that Day. This is the Assurance St. Paul had of his own Happiness as a Christian, and as a Minister; and from hence every true Christian may have the like Assurance of this being his Case in particular. They know they have a Building of God, and are assured on't by Faith; for Faith assures, and thereupon Hope expects; and the proper Object of Hope is an absent Good: For we are saved by Hope, but Hope that is seen is not Hope: for what a Man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? For if we hope for that we see not, then do we with Patience wait for it, Rom. 8. 24, 25. The greatest Support that sincere Believers can have, is by Hope in Christ, which is corroborated and strengthened by this Knowledge in the Text, and has a peculiar respect to the Resurrection to Eternal Life. And thus every true Believer knows. We know, and are sure, says the Apostle; We know that all things shall work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his Purpose. We know that our Labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.

Nor were the Desires of St. Paul and his Fellow Labourers after this blessed State less earnest than their Belief and Hopes were firm and stedfast; as appears by the Verses following our Text. For in this we groan earnestly, desiring to be cloathed upon with our House which is from Heaven. If so be that being cloath'd, we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this Tabernacle do groan, being burden'd; not for

that we would be uncloath'd, but cloath'd upon, that Mortality might be swallowed up of Life. And the Saints desire Happiness so much the more, because they have so clear a Knowledge of it in this Life ; which is express'd with abundance of Consolation by our blessed Saviour, John 14. 1, 2, 3, 4. Let not your Hearts be troubled ; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's House are many Mansions ; if it were not so, I would have told you : — I go to prepare a Place for you. And if I go to prepare a Place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also. — And observe, — Whither I go ye know, and the Way ye know. And tho' the Saints have not the full Possession at present, yet they have an infallible Right and Title in the Promise and Earnest, in the First Fruits and Beginnings of it, by him who hath purchas'd this Happiness for them at the highest Rate, and is gone before to take possession of it (as it were) in their Names, and prepare it for them : Whose Assurances also arise from the Testimonies of the Spirit of God, exciting and influencing in them those excellent Graces of Faith and Love to Christ, and guiding and directing them in the Ways of Virtue and true Piety : Their Assurance of Eternal Salvation may be depended upon. For such being adopted into the glorious Family of Heaven, are become the Children of God ; and if Children, then Heirs, Heirs of God, and joint-Heirs with Christ. From hence it is they derive their Claim to this Inheritance : For the Father would never have taken 'em into the number of his Children, and into a Covenant Relation, if he did not design to confer upon them their Inheritance : And therefore of his own free Gift they have this Title, to which he will exalt them in his own due time, that where he is, there they

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they *may be also*. And in the mean time *Christ dwells* in their Hearts by Faith, and by his Spirit quickens and enlivens them, that they *may know what is the Hope of his Calling, and what the Riches of the Glory of his Inheritance in the Saints, and what the exceeding Greatness of his Power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty Power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the Dead, and set him at his own Right Hand in the Heavenly Places; and so on.* Eph. i. 18, 19, 20.

Hereupon it is, that *Christ* is said to be in us *the Hope of Glory*; and that *our Lives are hid with Christ in God*. And tho' it doth not yet fully appear what we shall be, yet in part it doth; for we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And it was under this Notion of receiving *Christ*, that St. John was so well satisfied in the Security of the *Eternal Reward*: For, observe, he says, *We shall be like him*; — There's the Perfection of our Natures: — *We shall see him as he is*; — There's the Excellency of our Enjoyments.

While we are in this World, we have an undoubted knowledge of our Future State; but as to the Particulars thereof, that's veiled from Human Nature, and obscured from the most penetrating Aspect; — *We know* but little of it. For in Things that depend upon Divine Revelation (and such certainly is our Future Happiness) 'tis impossible for us to know any more than God is pleased to manifest to us.

That Good Men shall be Happy in another World, God has revealed to us in General: But then as to the
Par-

Particular Circumstances of this Happiness, they are still conceal'd from us. But we have thus much to depend upon, *This we know, This we are confidently assured of, That if the Earthly House of this Tabernacle be dissolved, we have a Building of God, a House not made with Hands, Eternal in the Heavens.*

And this was what bore up our Deceased Friend; made her pass chearfully through *this World*, and gave her Assurance of the *World to come*. For she knew in whom she believed; and that when the *Earthly House of her Tabernacle* was dissolved, she had a *Building of God*.

She was a Gentlewoman that had attained to considerable Accomplishments, which she improved in being an Ornament to her Profession. Her Religion taught her such an excellent Disposition: And her Humility and Patience throughout the whole course of her Actions were so conspicuous, that none who were acquainted with her, can entertain a disrespectful Thought of her Memory.

Her Illness was growing on her a considerable time, and wasted her extremely, till at last it brought her upon her Death-bed: But under all her Sickness and Pains, *that* Humility and Patience which so much adorn'd her Life before, was now the more remarkable, in her Submission to the Divine Will without the least Complaint, and gave sufficient Demonstration of the Work of Grace wrought on her Heart; and at last breathed out her Soul, without so much as a Sigh or Groan, that could be heard or perceived. So that we have good reason to believe her among those happy Souls that have *died in the Lord*: —
In which Blessed Place we leave her. All

All that now remains, is to make the

APPLICATION.

1st. What has been said, should lead us to consider, What this Body of ours is, which is call'd *an Earthly House*; and tho' like an *House* curiously built, and affords a good Prospect, yet but an *Earthly House*: It was formed out of the Dust of the Earth; *Dust thou art, and unto Dust shalt thou return.* We dwell in *Houses of Clay*, whose Foundations are in the Dust, and which are crush'd sooner than a *Moth*. This should put us in mind of the Frailty of Human Nature, how many Accidents attend us, how many Diseases are incident to our Bodies, and which continually happen, to carry us off the Stage of this World. The Prophet tells us, *All Flesh is Grass, and the Glory of Man is as the Flower of Grass; the Grass withereth, and the Flower thereof fadeth away.* And says holy Job, *Man that is born of a Woman is of few days, and full of trouble; he cometh forth as a flower, and is cut down; he fleeth as a shadow, and continueth not.*

Since then our Time is so short, and our Life but as a Vapour, which is a Fume extracted out of the Earth, that just appears, and then vanishes away:—Let us be so wise as to understand this, and consider our Latter End.

2dly.

2dly. This Body is not only call'd *an Earthly House*, but, *the Earthly House of this Tabernacle*.

Tabernacles or *Tents* are but the meanest Dwellings, and most contemptible Cottages, made up of the coarsest Stuff, just to secure the Person within from the Weather; and were chiefly in use among *Shepherds* and *Travellers*, and now among *Soldiers*: Which shews our Warfare, *That as good Soldiers of Jesus Christ, we must endure Hardship, to maintain the Honour of so great a Master, in whose Cause we are engaged.*

And if these *Tents* or *Tabernacles* were also used by *Shepherds* and *Travellers* of old, — What then can more accurately set forth our State, that we are *Strangers and Pilgrims on Earth, and Sojourners in the Land, as all our Fathers were?* We read of *Abraham*, that he *sojourned in the Land of Promise, as in a strange Country, dwelling in Tabernacles, with Isaac and Jacob, the Heirs with him of the same Inheritance.* Which shews us, we are in a *strange Country*, we *dwell in Mesek*, and *sojourn in a weary Land.* We are on our Way, passing through, not only a *strange*, but an *ill-natur'd Country.* We are travelling to our Father's House, where we shall, as soon as we arrive thither, have Rest from all our Fatigues; *for there remaineth a Rest for the People of God.* And when *Christ* calls his People Home, he says; "Come to thy Rest; enjoy what thou couldst not meet with in that World in which thou hast liv'd. Thou hast been, like *Noah's Dove*, weary'd with flying over the face of the Waters: Come into

“ into the Ark, where thou shalt be safe: Leave it,
“ as *Abraham* left his Native Country, and his Fa-
“ ther’s House, without Hesitation or Reply to the
“ Call of God, when the Good of a more plentiful
“ Country is thine. Reckon not thy self a Loser,
“ tho’ thou must lay down thine *Earthly Tabernacle*;
“ for, at the same Time thou partest with all those
“ Corruptions, which Grace had not rooted out;
“ and all those tormenting Fears, by which thy Thoughts
“ have been discompos’d, and almost distracted; and
“ those Burdens which have made thee *walk softly* all
“ thy Days. Tell thy Persecutors, That their Fury,
“ which could not be stop’t before, shall pursue thee
“ no farther. *There the wicked cease from troubling;*
“ *and there the weary are at rest.*

3. *The Earthly House of this Tabernacle must be dissolved.*

We must be taken away from our *Tabernacles*, and they must be dissolved, and moulder into Dust. As Storms and Tempests beat upon our *Tabernacle*, and meet with the Inhabitant; so one violent Distemper or another seizes the Body, and removes us from this *Earthly House*: Or if we escape these Tempests, the *Tabernacle* may be worn out by long Use; so will our Bodies be dissolved. Let us then often think of our *Dissolution*, and prepare accordingly. It’s but a little while that our Bodies are serviceable for our Souls: For, says *Job*, *What is our Strength, that we should hope? and what is our End, that we should prolong our Life? Is our Strength the Strength of Stones? or is our Flesh of Brass?* No; we are hast’ning to the Dust. It’s appointed for all Men once to die. *What Man is he*

that liveth, and shall not see Death; shall he deliver himself from the Grave? And says the Wiseman, Tho' a Man live many Years, and rejoice in them all; yet let him remember the Days of Darkness, they shall be many. And thrice happy and blessed will it be for all those, who, with solid Assurance, when the time of their departure is at hand, can say with St. Paul, I desire to be dissolv'd, and to be with Christ.

4. Since the Earthly House of this Tabernacle must be dissolved, ——— What manner of Persons ought we to be in all manner of Conversation and Godliness? How should we be continually thinking on our Latter End; Not flattering our selves with the Thoughts of a long Continuance here; but that the Consideration of our being dissolv'd, should make us live every Day as tho' it were our last, and learn to die daily. This would be a means to banish from our Minds all Pride and Affectation, make us modest in our own Conceits, and low in our own Eyes, walking humbly with our God. What is there in this World that should make us desire it? All its Pomp and Greatness must end: And these Bodies that we cloath so fine and gay, take so much Pains with, and spend so much Time about, must be laid in the Dust of the Earth. The Earth we so unconcernedly traverse, will ere long receive us into its cold Embraces; and the Rich and Poor, however distant in this World, must both meet together in the Grave. It's good for us then to be meek and humble; for how great soever we may be in our own Eyes, or in the Eyes of others, yet our Greatness must end. And tho' our Entrance into the World was in a noble manner, and had large Fortunes, yet our Exit may be contemptible enough. Let us then think of these things, and abase

abase our selves before God, *that we may never think of our selves above what is meet, but always think soberly.* And whatsoever our Hand findeth to do, let us do it with all our Might; for there is no Work, nor Device, nor Knowledge, nor Wisdom in the Grave, whither we are going.

5. Is the Knowledge of Heaven and Happiness discovered to us; and that as soon as the *Earthly House of this Tabernacle is dissolved, there's a Building of God*, and the Saints have the Assurance thereof? Then let our constant Preparation be, when we cease to be, to be received into *Everlasting Habitations*, and be admitted into the *Joy of our Lord*. Oh, that we may have an Interest in Christ, that our Expectations may not fail us at the last! How should we spiritualize all that we meet with in this World, seriously contemplating on the Joys that shall hereafter be revealed; frequently meditating on that happy Place we are all so desirous of, and profess to be going to; making the *Statutes of the Lord our Songs in the House of our Pilgrimage*. Let us be Patient under all the Troubles of this Life, and in our Patience possess our Souls; learning, *Spernere se sperni*, to despise being despised, and not to be discomposed at it; knowing, that *nothing shall harm us, if we be Followers of that which is good*; and the greatest Afflictions won't last long, but Death will put an End to all. And how sweet, how ravishing, how transporting will it be, after all our Trials, to be rewarded with *Immortal Glory and Happiness!*

To CONCLUDE

Would you be glorious Saints in the Everlasting Mansions, shine as Stars in the Firmament of Heaven, triumph with Angels, sing with Cherubims, and join the Celestial Choir in eternal Praises to *him that sits upon the Throne, and the Lamb for evermore*? Then see that you refuse not *him that speaketh*: But be ye Followers of them who thro' Faith and Patience inherit the Promises.

F I N I S.

ERRATA

PAge 4. l. 14. for *and* r. in. p. 13. l. 16. for *its* r. *their*. l. 18. *ibid.* p. 14. l. 26. r. *Representation*.

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